COUNTERURBANISATION: COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE DEVELOPING AND DEVELOPED WORLD

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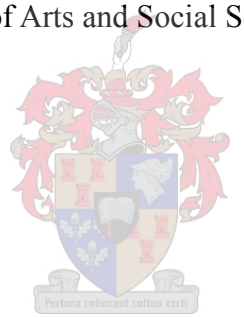

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to address the current paucity of research on counterurbanisation in the developing world and its role in rural development by means of descriptive statistical and hierarchical cluster analysis of counterurbanisation and counterurbanisation destinations in South Africa. The results are then placed within the larger context of developing world counterurbanisation research. The study argues firstly, in line with other recent studies in the field, that counterurbanisation is a meaningful subject of scientific interest due to its proportional impact on the smaller settlements which this type of migration targets. This applies even in cases where it isn't the dominant migration pattern. Secondly, the study finds evidence that counterurbanisation is far more significant in the developing world than commonly assumed, and also far more varied: While there is clear and widespread evidence of typical developed world post-productivist/environmentalist counterurbanisation, research also shows two other distinctive forms: Firstly, pre-productivist/ -productionist agrarian counterurbanisation occurs in countries with struggling urban economies and under-utilized agricultural capital; Secondly, primary and secondary sector-led productivist/productionist counterurbanisation, contrary to the developed world, may well be the dominant form of counterurbanisation in developing countries. These variations have clear implications for migration and rural development policy differentiation in the developing world.

Keywords and phrases: Counterurbanisation, Counterurbanization, Developing Countries, Rural Development, Post-productivism,

OPSOMMING

Die doelwit van hierdie studie is om die huidige navorsings-leemte oor teenversteedeliking in die ontwikkelende wêreld en die rol wat dit speel in landelike ontwikkeling aan te spreek deur middel van beskrywende statistieke en hierargiese trosontleeding van teenverstedeliking en teenverstedeliking bestemmings in Suid Afrika. Die resultate word dan in die breër konteks van navorsing oor teenverstedeliking in die ontwikkelende wêreld geplaas. Die studie stel eerstens, in ooreenstemming met ander onlankse studies in die gebied, dat teenverstedeliking 'n betekenisvolle wetenskaplike onderwerp van navorsing is weens die proposionele invloed op die kleiner nedersettings wat deur hierdie tipe migrasie geteiken word. Dit geld selfs in gevalle waar dit nie die dominante migrasie patroon is nie. Tweedens, find die studie bewyse dat teenverstedeliking veel meer betekenisvol is in die ontwikkelende wêreld as wat voorheen aanvaar is, en dat dit ook 'n groter verskeidenheid vertoon: Terwyl daar duidelike en verspreide bewyse is van tipiese ontwikkelde wêreld-na-produktiwistiese/environmentalistiese teenverstedeliking, toon navorsing ook twee ander diskrete vorms: Eerstens, voor-produktiwistiese/- produksionistiese landbou-gerigte teenverstedeliking verskyn in lande met sukkelende stedelike ekonomieë en 'n onderbenutte landbou kapitaal. Tweedens, primêre en sekondêre sektor-geleide produktiwistiese/ produksionistiese teenverstedeliking, in teenstelling met die ontwikkelde wêreld, mag wel die dominante vorm van teenverstedeliking in die ontwikkelende wêreld wees. Hierdie variasies het duidelike implikasies vir migrasie en landelike ontwikkelingsbeleidonderskeid in die ontwikkelende wêreld.

Trefwoorde en frases: Teenverstedelikking, Ontwikkelende Lande, Landelike Ontwikkeling, 'Na-produktivisme'

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is counterurbanisation?

In the 1970s a new surprising turnaround was observed in several developed countries, where the dominant trend of concentration and centralisation was replaced by deconcentration and decentralisation – specifically, the relationship between settlement size and population growth became inverted (Beale 1975, Berry 1976). Many met this unexpected change with disbelief, questioning the accuracy of results, while even among those who accepted this change opinions regarding its significance and implications were mixed (Fielding 1986). Some questioned whether the effects of counterurbanisation were significantly different from urbanisation and suburbanisation – i.e. a continuation of wave theory – to warrant a distinction (Gordon 1979, Champion 2001, Gottlieb 2006), while others questioned whether this is more than a short-term product of extraordinary economic conditions (Richter 1985, Butzin 1988).

Even for those who accept the implications, there are major ambiguities regarding the definition, causes and effects of counterurbanisation (Fielding 1986, Champion 1988, Fielding 1989, Geyer & Kontuly 1993, Sant & Simmons 1993, Champion 2001, Mitchell 2004, Milbourne 2007). The reason why skepticism remains to this day, and why there are still so many questions surrounding the topic is due to its complexity (Sant & Simmons 1993, Mitchell 2004). For example, polarisation reversal describes a form of deconcentration similar to counterurbanisation – perhaps an early phase of counterurbanisation – but manifests mainly in the form of industrial investment flight from primary cities to nearby regional centres just outside their immediate catchment areas (Richardson, 1978, 1980) followed by similar out-migration trends (Geyer & Kontuly 1993). The distinction between the two therefore remains unclear due to the ambiguity of the term 'city' and questions about its functional footprint and proper bounding. For this reason, counterurbanisation in the first place is difficult to accurately measure, and in the second place, this complexity means that even

when the data is clear, its interpretation might not be as straightforward.

However, in spite of these uncertainties, two things seem to be clear from the evidence: firstly, a major trend of deconcentration and decentralisation, distinctly different from prior trends is occurring in many developed countries (Vining & Kontuly 1978, Ceresa, Meia, Mela, Pellegrini & Petsimeris 1983, Fielding 1989, Cohen 2004, Champion 2005), and secondly, even in smaller volumes its effect is pronounced due its proportional impact on the small population settlements where it is occurring (Bosworth 2006, Bosworth 2010, Akgun, Baycan-Levent, Nijkamp & Poot 2011).

SECTION 2: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COUNTERURBANISATION

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COUNTERURBANISATION

In the first decades of counterurbanisation research, there was a prevalent assumption that counterurbanisation was not significant except as the dominant type of migration (Fielding 1989). Although views have changed, this, along with the contingent problems frequently encountered by demographic research in the developing world, namely sporadic data, uncertain credibility and ambiguous data (Cohen 2004, Potts 2005, Beauchemin 2011), has meant that research on counterurbanisation in these countries is generally lacking (Mibourne 2007).

Yet there is good reason to believe that counterurbanisation is a continuous, long-term historical occurrence and not a recent advent. And as stated above, there is strong evidence that counterurbanisation has a significant impact even as a migration sub-stream on smaller settlements. In the long-term then, it is foreseeable that counterurbanisation may also play an important role on the form of urban systems as a whole through this significant role in the formation of cities.

2.1 Historical support

One of these sources of indirect support for the long-term influence of counterurbanisation is the history of colonisation (or more specifically colonial or settler migration, since the former term has become associated primarily with political domination rather than migration as such). Settler migration frequently corresponds with population movements from more densely settled, urbanised and technologically advanced regions to more sparsely settled, less urbanised and technologically advanced regions, and can generally speaking be defined as a form of deconcentrated or decentralised settlement (Loyd & Metzer 2012). The history of colonisation already begins in the dawn of history with the earliest civilisations, most of who participated in colonisation to varying

degrees. Rapid urban formation and spread across Europe and the Middle-east are particularly associated with the Phoenician, Greek and Roman eras of colonisation to which can be traced the origins of many of the region's largest present day urban settlements. Deconcentration increased during the dark ages with rural early-feudal settlements eclipsing urban settlements as the dominant settlement pattern. It is during this period that Rome declined from the world's largest city with a population possibly over a million to near-abandonment in the 6th century, a process mirrored by most contemporary cities in Western Europe. The continuation of counterurbanisation through the middle ages and the early modern period in England is mentioned by Martin (2009), predominantly in the form of commuter settlements around aristocrat country estates around capital cities like London.

The modern history of migration typically begins with the dominance of urbanisation in Western Europe with the advent of the industrial revolution in the 18th century. However, as Milbourne (2007) points out, a major weakness in migration theory is the almost exclusive focus on internal migration. When internal urbanisation rates during this period are compared to the high rate of external predominantly downstream colonial migration (which has continued well into the post-colonial era, as evidenced for instance by the Ten Pound Poms in Australia), urbanisation may no longer appear so overwhelmingly dominant, and the role of counterurbanisation as a significant substream may be vindicated. It is only in the late twentieth century, after the first turnarounds, that counterurbanisation begins to be well-documented in scientific literature.

This historical evidence strongly suggests that counterurbanisation is not a recent occurrence, but rather a phenomenon which has existed for as long as there have been cities, or in other words, for as long as there has been urbanisation and as a necessary companion of urbanisation. It suggests a wave theory view of counterurbanisation, like that suggested by the theory of Differential Urbanisation, where all migration types may be constants but of varying scales of dominance (Geyer, Geyer, du Plessis & van Eeden 2012).

2.2 Support from economic theories

clarify rural meaning

The historical evidence is supported by economic and migration theory. Core and peripheral economic growth are often driven by different economic forces. Economic growth of core regions is associated with concentration dominants, often at the expense of peripheral areas, while deconcentration is associated with weakening core economies, often producing business flight and

associated counterurban shifts in migration (Vining 1986, Geyer & Kontuly 1993). This is because concentration and deconcentration are determined by competing centrifugal and centripetal forces. Command and control functions of financial services that are attracted to inner core centres, for instance, generate centripetal forces that support urbanisation while congestion costs in core cities and declining transportation and communnication costs cause a centrifugal force that leads to capital flight and counterurbanisation (Champion 1988, Champion 2001, Gottlieb 2006, Hosszu 2009).

But while centripetal and centrifugal forces are to some extent opposing, they are also complementary. Urban economies depend upon the concentration of markets, labour and inputs. But as Central Place Theory posits, this in turn is dependent upon the deconcentration or outward spread of transportation and communications infrastructure related to growing service areas. The hierarchical level of central places is determined by their range – market, labour and resource concentration is largely determined by resource development, market capture and labour mobilisation in the urban hinterland (Christaller 1933).

In the same way, developing economies (nationally and regionally) are typically characterised by a pattern of development called *developmentalism* or *productionism*, where limited resources and the need to maintain high levels of productivity results in highly concentrated development around key resources (Hart 1983). However, as economies mature, their need for resources and their ability to satisfy those needs with technological advances and accumulated capital results in increasingly deconcentrated, characteristically *environmentalist* patterns of development. Increasingly deconcentrated infrastructure and technological advances in turn provides increased mobility, leading to commercial and labour deconcentration as well.

The concepts of commercial counterurbanisation (Bosworth 2006, Bosworth 2010, Bosworth & Atterton 2012, Halfacree 1997, Mitchell & Madden 2014) and the commercial incubator hypotheses (Davelaar & Nijkamp 1988) also support this theory. Commercial counterurbanisation hypothesises that rural environmental advantages attract wealthier, better educated, older and more skilled highly economically active migrants, which then endows rural areas with economically competitive advantages in human capital assets. The incubator hypothesis argues that while agglomerations serve as incubators for new businesses in terms of factors important to business development such as face-to-face contacts, market, technology and human capital access, more mature business often deconcentrate or counterurbanise to hinterland locations for market expansion and reduced competition.

All these theories suggest that economic concentration is dependent on a subsidiary deconcentration. Cities must invest capital, in the form of lines of communication or transportation,

resource extraction, and market development, and human capital in terms of urban factors (agents) to manage these investments to enable the agglomeration economies of concentration to exist and grow. Similarly, economic deconcentration often runs parallel with population deconcentration, since economic growth is often equally dependent on both capital investment and the availability of labour (Lee 1989). Recent counterurbanisation research also emphasises the interdependence between economic and population deconcentration, so that evidence of economic deconcentration is also probable evidence of human deconcentration or counterurbanisation – on its own, the rural idyll is a pipe-dream, since romantic ideals of the countryside do not provide for human economic needs (Halfacree 1997).

Clearly when the deconcentration component is larger in scale than concentration, the process is self-defeating as has been proven in certain cases in the United States and Europe at the beginning of post-Fordism in the early 1970s. But irrespective of its scale, it should constitute an instrumental component. Therefore, on this basis it seems apparent that counterurbanisation plays an important role in the development of urban systems. Together these theories strongly suggest that economic deconcentration and counterurbanisation are coexisting forces, and furthermore that economic deconcentration is a requisite for or at least a common by-product of economic growth. This implies, similarly to the historical evidence, counterurbanisation is not only a continuous process, but also significant to larger processes of economic development and population redistribution.

2.3 The value of counterurbanisation research

Regardless of its consequences, counterurbanisation research has value firstly by assisting us to determine who is counterurbanising, to what extent, where it is occurring, and what its causes and effects are. Beyond this, counterurbanisation research may also help to determine whether the consequences of migration are beneficial or not. There is widespread acknowledgement that some degree of economic and population diffusion to peripheral areas is beneficial to a country's national well-being. Polarisation forces are weakened by increasing accessibility to urban economic opportunities and services in peripheral areas, a policy approach followed by almost all governments (Lee 1985, Brown & Lawson 1989). Furthermore, recent research suggests that counterurbanisation plays an important role in peripheral development (Bosworth 2006, Bosworth 2010, Bosworth & Atterton 2012, Halfacree 1997, Mitchell & Madden 2014). Counterurbanisation often constitutes the migration of highly skilled and educated, wealthy, entrepreneurial older migrants to specific peripheral regions. This migration has in many cases been positively associated

with employment creation, higher incomes and local economic development there.

At the same time, counterurbanisation has been associated with several detrimental consequences as well. The most common complaint against counterurbanisation is that it results in uneven and exclusionary development in smaller settlements and creates a shortage of lower income housing stock and an over-demand on public services there (Loffler & Steinecke 2006, Spencer 1995, Martin 2009, Bosworth 2006). Counterurbanisation is both geographically and demographically uneven (Halfacree 2001), disfavouring remoter rural settlements (Stockdale, Findlay & Short 2000) and ethnic minority enclaves (Beale 1977). Additionally, it has also been associated with loss of environmental capital and cultural entropy (Escribano 2006, Stockdale, Findlay & Short 2000), and is blamed for contributing to urban decay by drawing economically valuable human capital out of the cities (Brown & Lawson 1989). However, counterurbanisation partly reverses the rural brain drain, and research has also associated counterurbanisation with greater environmental and cultural appreciation and preservation (Akgun, Baycan-Levent, Nijkamp & Poot 2011, Stockdale 2006, Scott Gilbert & Gelan 2007). Rather, most agree that the real problem lies with rural governments, which often lack the capacity to effectively deal with the rapid development which often accompanies counterurbanisation (Stockdale 2006).

SECTION 3: ANALYSIS

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 Aims of the study

The aim of the present study is to explore the significance of counterurbanisation in the developing world. The above evidence suggests that counterurbanisation is a long-term migration form with a significant influence on smaller settlement formation and growth, and therefore indirectly on urban-systems as a whole. If true, then research on counterurbanisation in developing economies may be of great value in developing a more complete understanding of the role that counterurbanisation plays in the development of urban-systems over time.

The present study aims to fill the vacuum in research on sub-stream counterurbanisation and counterurbanisation in developing economies firstly by an in depth analysis of counterurbanisation as it is occurring in South Africa. Secondly, these results will be compared against the more extensive foundation of counterurbanisation research in the developed world. As stated above, there is little extant research on counterurbanisation in the developing world, with most of it focused only on determining the scope rather than more in depth questions such as cause and effect. In this way, the more extensive research in the developed world may serve to fill in the gaps in counterurbanisation research in the developing world. Finally, the result will also be compared with findings of counterurbanisation studies in other developing countries to provide a general understanding of counterurbanisation in the developing world.

3.2 Methodology

Presently research indicates that South Africa is still in-between the urbanisation and polarisation

reversal phases, but with different dominants for different demographic groups (Geyer & Geyer 2015, Geyer & Geyer 2014, Geyer, Geyer, du Plessis & van Eeeden 2014, Geyer, Geyer, du Plessis & van Eeeden 2012, Drewes 2009, Geyer & van der Merwe 2002, Geyer 1990). As such, counterurbanisation in South Africa, as it may be in many developing countries, is still a migration sub-stream.

Aside from a few exceptions, both counterurbanisation and total migration statistics have not varied significantly over the last 20 years. In fact, migration numbers have decreased slightly even though the total population increased by almost 30% over the twenty year period. This proportional increase in migration in the early 1990s is likely related to the increased freedom of movement after the relaxation of Apartheid migration restrictions. Most of the other localised fluctuations were in migration to mining centres, likely linked to fluctuations in mine production.

While the total population measures which are standardly used to measure gross migration proportions may be relevant to determining migration dominants, it accompanies certain inaccuracies (Gordon 1979, Fielding 1989), and is less suited to measuring migration sub-streams. Instead, for the purposes of this study, actual migration data will be used. All data employed in this study is provided by Quantec, which in turn has been compiled from Stats SA sources, unless otherwise indicated. The study employs data from the 2011 national census, as well as annual regional GVA and employment statistics from 2002 to 2011, coinciding with the ten year migration data included in the census.

Due to the fact that census data only specifies the province of origin, complete counterurbanisation data is not available. However, Gauteng province comprises the country's primate city region and is nearly completely urbanised, with an urban population percentage of 97%. In addition, as with many developing countries, South Africa's city rank distribution is highly uneven, with Gauteng comprising over a third of South Africa's urban population, and more than half the population of the six largest cities of metropolitan designation. For this reason, Gauteng out-migration will be used as an indicator of general counterurbanisation trends across the country.

The first stage of the analysis looks at total as well as age and population group figures of Gauteng out-migrants in order to determine the extent and demographic profile of counterurbanisation. In the second stage of analysis, the characteristics of the primary Gauteng out-migrant destinations are investigated. Migration within the municipal regions of Gauteng is excluded, and the percentages of Gauteng out-migrants of the total populations are used instead of gross figures in order to determine the extent of migrant contribution to local populations.

The municipal level was selected because the smaller areal units (i.e. main and sub-place levels)

are less standardised and often cut across settlements, potentially resulting in statistical inconsitencies. As research demonstrates, counterurbanisation is generally large urban to small urban-within-rural rather than urban to agrarian rural migration (Sant & Simmons 1993, Gottlieb 2006, Halfacree 2007), and municipalities are generally large enough to include most potential residential choices for migrants to a specific settlement.

To determine the primary destinations for counterurbanisation, municipalities outside of Gauteng Province were ranked in terms of Gauteng out-migrant contributions to the total municipal populations. At around 1.75% Gauteng in-migrant population of total municipal population or greater, three general geographical patterns among the 35 selected local municipalities (LMs) became prominent, namely,

Counterurbanisation Destinations	Seat	Gauteng migrants	Total migrants
Western Cape: Saldanha Bay LM	Vredenburg	1.85	9.16
Western Cape: Overstrand	Hermanus	2.70	11.77
Western Cape: Hessequa	Riversdale	1.82	4.80
Western Cape: Mossel Bay	Mossel Bay	3.04	11.44
Western Cape: George	George	2.01	7.35
Western Cape: Bitou	Plettenberg Bay	3.10	13.35
Western Cape: Knysna	Knysna	2.96	9.84
Eastern Cape: Ndlambe	Port Alfred	1.77	3.59
Eastern Cape: Kouga	Jeffreys Bay	2.09	5.81
Northern Cape: Gamagara	Kathu	2.42	10.67
Northern Cape: Thembelihle	Hopetown	2.06	7.27
Kwazulu Natal: Hibiscus Coast	Port Shepstone	1.94	6.20
Kwazulu Natal: uMngeni	Howick	1.79	4.08
North-West: Kgetlengrivier	Koster	2.13	4.67
Mpumalanga: Steve Tshwete	Middelburg	2.76	9.07
Mpumalanga: Emakhazeni	Belfast	1.82	4.48
Mpumalanga: Thaba Chweu	Lydenburg	2.23	8.59
Limpopo: Thabazimbi	Thabazimbi	3.58	20.48
Limpopo: Lephalale	Lephalale	3.38	7.21
Limpopo: Modimolle	Modimolle	2.53	5.25

Table 1: Counterurbanisation destinations

- long-distance counterurbanisation to notable 'vacation and retirement destination' LMs, mostly along the coast, known for their amenable climate, attractive natural qualities and a long-established recreation infrastructure.

- middle-distance counterurbanisation to mining-economy LMs.

- short-distance counterurbanisation to LMs on the urban periphery immediately bordering Gauteng province.

The last group more correctly constitutes polarisation reversal rather than counterurbanisation in the specific sense adopted here. These comprised 15 of the 35 municipalities, and were excluded as beyond the scope of this study: some of these included settled areas within the urban edge of the Gauteng metropolitan area, constituting city-internal migration rather than counterurbanisation, and the rest included significant areas lying within the daily urban systems or commuter belts of the cities of Gauteng, where the majority of migrants would be urban commuters.

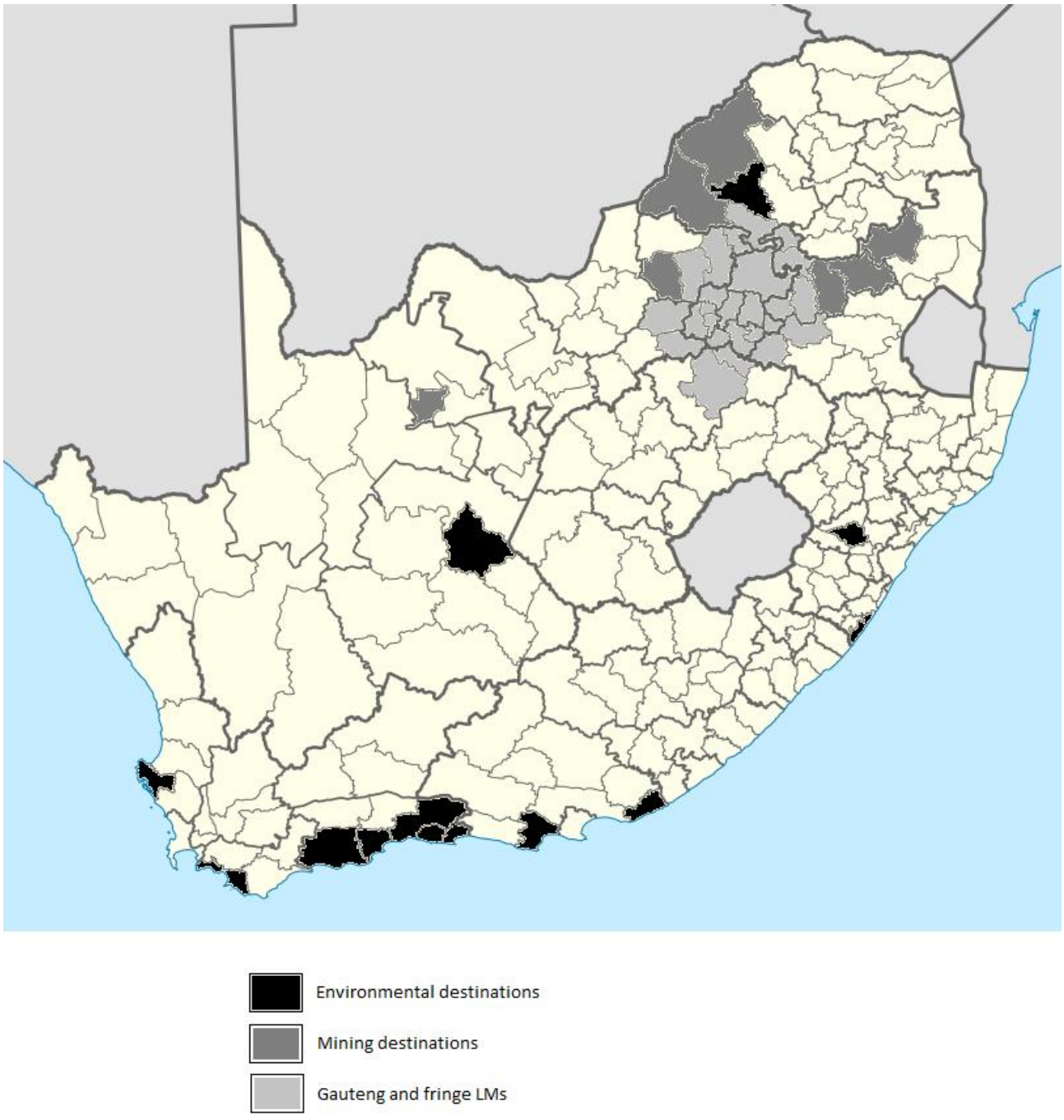

Figure 1: Map of counterurbanisation destinations

Statistical variables for the selected 20 LMs deemed potentially relevant to counterurbanisation in the light of prior research were selected and similarly standardised as proportions of total

populations. These included, economic data (total and sectoral GVA and employment), individual demographic data (urbanisation, income, education, age and population group), household demographic data (access to amenities and luxury goods) and migrant data (age and population group). Due to large annual fluctuations in the economic data, average annual GVA and employment values for the 2002-2011 period were used. For demographic data, no such continuous data is available, so the latest census (2011) results were selected. However, demographic statistics for the most part are not as changeable as economic data, so the statistics selected may be deemed reliable. For more discrete migration statistics, 2011 results were selected, which record migrants entering the municipality over the last 10 years and still living there at the time when the census was taken (2011). For the purposes of differentiation, those variables with minimal geographical variation were excluded (see below). Then a hierarchical cluster analysis was performed on the 20 selected municipalities for the selected variables. Due to large variations in the data, non-parametric measures were selected. Both Spearman's rank correlation and Kendal's tau where tested, providing similar results, but the former was selected as it produced better clustering and fewer outliers (Figure 2).

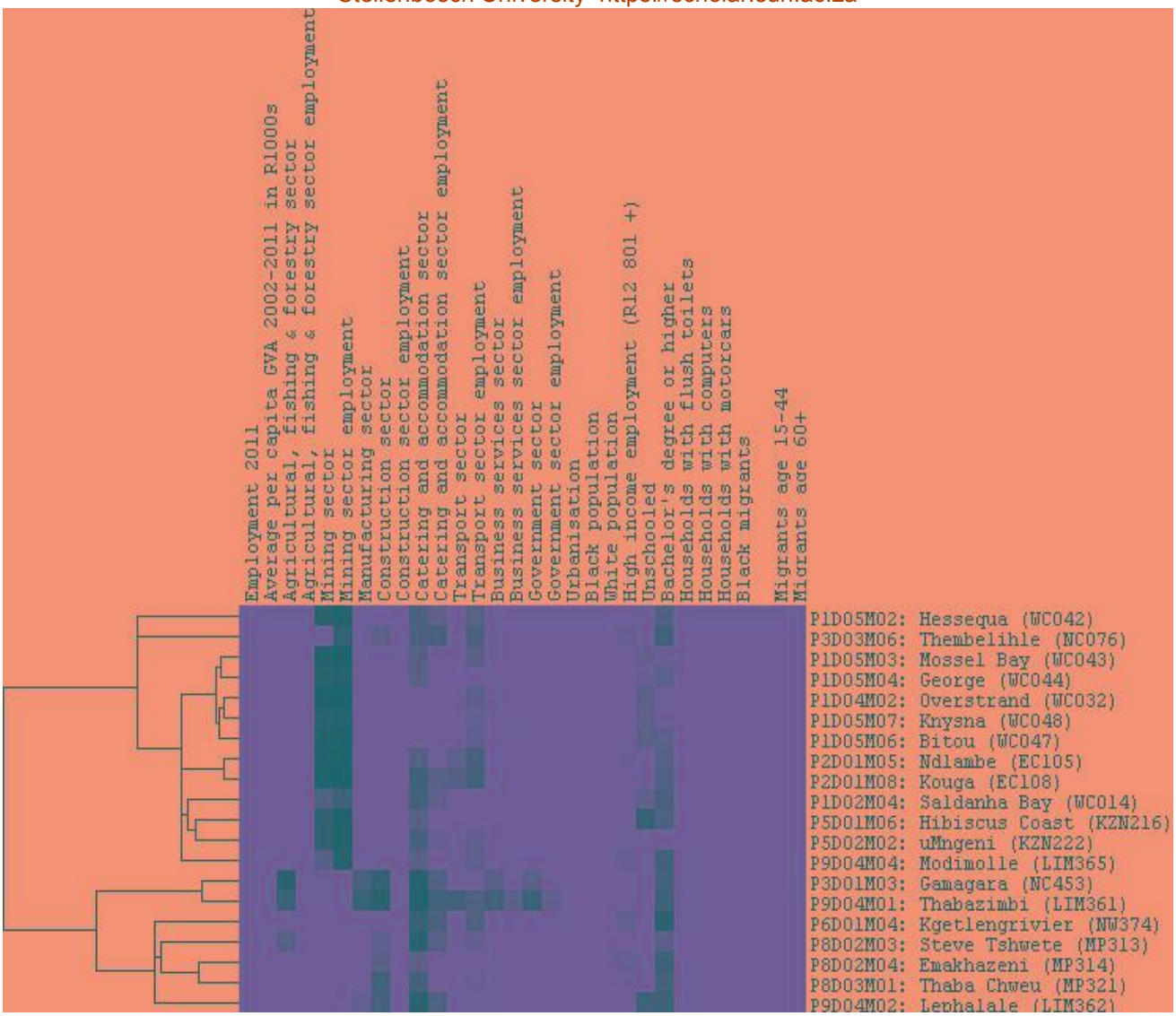

Figure 2: Cluster analysis results

Cluster features	Sunshine Destinations	Mining Destinations	National Average	Non-metropolitan Average
Gauteng migrants 2001-2011 (% of total population)	2.19	2.76	0.77	1.01
Total migrants (2002-2011) (% of total population)	7.82	9.57	4.30	3.05
Employment 2011	30.43	35.02	25.46	19.86
Average per capita GVA 2002-2011 in R1000s	30.95	60.58	22.57	16.68
GVA/Employment 2002-2011 (% total)				
Agricultural, fishing & forestry sector GVA	13.71	2.45	2.92	5.53
Agricultural, fishing & forestry sector employment	24.39	14.08	8.80	14.88
Mining sector GVA	0.88	60.93	8.91	17.45
Mining sector employment	1.50	20.53	3.55	5.73
Manufacturing sector GVA	17.64	8.26	16.35	12.58
Construction sector GVA	6.93	1.33	3.28	2.58
Construction sector employment	11.48	6.40	6.73	6.81
Catering and accommodation sector GVA	2.36	0.48	1.01	0.88
Catering and accommodation sector employment	4.47	2.47	2.16	1.99
Business services sector GVA	18.00	3.81	13.76	10.23
Business services sector employment	11.89	5.77	12.37	7.65
Government sector GVA	12.83	4.20	15.29	14.96
Government sector employment	9.89	7.12	12.19	13.16
Population data (% of total)				
Urbanisation	82.65	74.11	62.89	41.27
Black population	52.91	79.33	79.20	86.09
White population	23.54	15.74	8.84	5.43
High income employment (R12 801 +)	4.33	5.39	4.34	2.49
Unschooled	3.14	4.18	6.08	8.04
University degree	2.26	1.37	2.55	1.44
Household data (% of total)				
Households with flush toilets	71.25	71.54	60.11	42.00
Households with computers	40.28	32.53	29.61	22.83
Households with motorcars	26.71	20.86	21.42	14.06
Migration data (% of total)				
Black migrants	49.95	61.40	72.04	67.04
White migrants	46.36	33.92	21.09	26.22
Migrants age 15-44	56.80	69.32	70.97	64.85
Migrants age 60+	18.95	4.99	5.17	6.94

Table 2: Cluster features

Two clusters emerged, one featuring prominent environmentally desirable migration destinations, the other mining centres attracting productionism driven migration. The cluster analysis thus confirmed the geographical patterns given above.

SECTION 4: DISCUSSION

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Counterurbanisation in the developed world

The most frequently given motivation for counterurbanisation is behavioural, related to the concepts of the 'rural idyll' versus 'urban hell' (Berry 1976). While there is a great deal of support for this rationale from survey data (Halfacree 1997, Halfacree 2001), there are also several problems: Firstly, there is evidence that preferences have been changing with the increased prestige and desirability of urban cosmopolitan living (Gottlieb 2006). Secondly, although environment plays a part, migration is complex and the result of a combination of factors which are often idiosyncratic to the migrant (Halliday & Coombes 1995). Thirdly, as failed migration attests, what people think they want and what they actually want are often different (Stockdale 2006). Fourthly, actual migration studies indicate a greater preference for a 'best of both worlds' lifestyle rather than pure rural living (Sant & Simmons 1993, Gottlieb 2006). And lastly, migrants still need to earn money to survive – demographic changes are rarely sustainable unless accompanied by necessary economic adaptations (Halfacree 1997).

For these reasons, a structural rather than behavioural approach to analysing counterurbanisation has been chosen. The structural approach focuses on the external forces influencing individual choices rather than personal motivations, and tends to be more holistic, objective and empirically motivated in its explanations. As sources indicate, motivations or causes for counterurbanisation are numerous and spatially diverse (Richardson 1980, Vining 1986, Butzin 1988, Champion 1988, Sant & Simmons 1993, Halfacree 1997, Halfacree 2001, Gottlieb 2006, Hosszu 2009):

Structural motivations for counterurbanisation	
1. *Increased mobility*	Transportation and communications technology and infrastructure development increases mobility primarily to the urban-periphery, but further migration as well.

2. *Diseconomies of scale*	Urban economic and social problems drive urban out-migration, including counterurbanisation.
3. *Rural development*	Rural development and micropolitan concentrations increases rural competitive advantage and creates small-scale agglomeration economies.
4. *Spatial development policies*	Urban development restrictions and rural development incentives may influence commercial and demographic counterurbanisation.
5. *Housing over-supply*	Rural depopulation reduces rural property prices, attracting low-income migrants.
6. *Industrial restructuring*	Late-stage product life-cycle industries may relocate to rural areas where property prices are lower or where there is greater accessibility to rural inputs.
7. *Retirement migration*	Aging populations may correspond with increased counterurbanisation.
8. *Short-term events*	Short-term economic and demographic changes, such as the post-war baby-boomer labour over-supply in the 1970s or the oil-crisis, may also influence migration.
9. *Tertiary sector growth*	Tertiary sector industries are generally more mobile or more strongly attracted to natural capital (particularly in the public (Beale 1977) and tourism/recreation sectors (see Champion 2005)).
10. *Increased prosperity*	Reduced income restrictions on job selection and residential location allows individuals to sacrifice income for higher net wages in terms of lower rural costs of living and other costless quality of life benefits (Bosworth 2010).
11. *Herding behaviour*	Social residential preferences and associated prestige may influence migration (Halfacree 1997), even at the detriment of individual migrants (Mitchell & Madden 2014, Stockdale 2006, Escribano 2007).
12. *Household structures*	Families with young children (Scott, Gilbert and Gelan 2007) and unmarried persons (Bijkers 2011) are among the highest counterurbanising demographic groups.
13. *Welfare and housing subsidies*	Individuals dependent on social grants may migrate to rural areas to benefit from lower costs of living (Hugo 1988).

Table 3: Structural motivations for counterurbanisation

4.2 General trends in the developing world

The results support the prior findings of Differential Urbanisation studies of South Africa (Geyer 1990, Geyer & van der Merwe 2002, Drewes 2009, Geyer, Geyer, du Plessis & van Eeden 2012, Geyer & Geyer 2014, 2015). Counterurbanisation is still a sub-stream, with Gauteng out-migrants constituting only approximately 1% of the total population between 1991 and 1996, and decreasing to 0.77% between 2001 and 2011. Gauteng migrants have comprised about 17% of total migrants

since 1996, even though the proportion of Gauteng's population to the national population has more than doubled between 1996 and 2011, implying that Gauteng's population has become even less mobile than the rest of the country. However, given that Gauteng's population comprises about half of the country's metropolitan population, complete counterurbanisation figures may be twice that. If this is the case then counterurbanisation may account for as much as a third of migration.

Of course, no single country can provide a perfect exemplar for drawing conclusions about migration trends in the developing world as a whole, but international research does suggests similar trends. Although it has long been assumed that urbanisation is the dominant form of migration in the developing world, based on research findings of the middle and later twentieth century (cf. Vining 1986), recent evidence strongly suggest a change from urbanisation and towards polarisation reversal and counterurbanisation. In general, urban growth rates are decreasing in the developing world, and worldwide, the strongest growth appears to be in smaller urban centres (Cohen 2004). Studies in Brazil (Baeninger 2002, Townroe & Keen 1984), Venezuela (Brown & Lawson 1989), Mexico (Aguilar & Graizbord 2002), Colombia (Lee 1985), South Africa (see above), Botswana (Gwebu 2006), Turkey (Baycan-Levent 2002, Gedik 2003), Korea (Lee 1989, Lee 1985), Sub-Saharan Africa (Potts 2009), China (Zhou 1991) and India (Mookherji & Geyer 2009, Moorkherji 2002) demonstrate strong indications of decentralisation and polarisation reversal trends. Furthermore, studies of Zambia (Potts 2005), Cote d'ivoire and Burkina Faso (Beauchemin 2011), and Romania (Ianos 2002) show clearly that in some developing countries, counterurbanisation has become the dominant migration form, and there are indications of significant counterurbanisation in South Africa (Ingle 2013, Geyer & Geyer 2014, Geyer & Geyer 2015, Geyer, Geyer, du Plessis & van Eeden 2012), Turkey (Gulumser, Baycan Levent & Nijkamp 2010) and Mexico (Aguilar & Graizbord 2002). Rural development studies in developing countries also suggest that counterurbanisation is a widespread phenomenon (Wilson 2003).

Research on the influence of factors such as age and social class on counterurbanising populations elsewhere in the developing world is limited, but the South African data at least shows a resemblance to developed world trends: South African counterurbanising populations comprise more young children (families with young children), fewer working adults, and more older adults than migrants in general, which reflects trends in the developed world. However, the numbers of child migrants are only larger in relation to migrant populations, not the overall population. Does this point to the impact reduced economic mobility of households with children in poorer developing world populations? Perhaps South African households with young children do not have the same level of economic freedom as families in the West to take on the risks of migration, though as a more advanced developing country, neither do they have to resort as frequently to the more extreme measures of sending children away to live with relatives in the countryside to make ends

meet. What the statistics does show however is that counterurbanisation appears to be less selective than other types of migration in terms of age, with percentages of counterurbanisers of the total population per age group varying between 0.47 and 1.09 percent (while total migrant percentages ranging from 2.1 to 7.77 percent).

In terms of population group data, results correspond with findings in the developed world, where counterurbanisation is more selective of better educated and more prosperous social groups. Whites are the most mobile population by a far margin, with approximately 1 in 10 whites having migrated between 2001 and 2011, compared with only about 1 in 26 blacks. Counterurbanisation is even more highly selective, with blacks constituting only 55.13 percent of all counterurbanisers compared to 38.9 percent for whites. These figures must be understood within the South African urban context: the white South African population is highly urbanised, so that it is only predictable that in regions where there are more whites, there will also be more white out-migrants. Even so, the statistics show that white urban populations are significantly more mobile (8.3% of Gauteng whites and 10.18% of all whites) than black urban populations (2.62% of Gauteng blacks and 3.89% of all blacks).

The South African data supports more complex theories of counterurbanisation, such as those of Differential Urbanisation (Geyer & Kontuly 1993, Geyer 1996) or Commercial Counterurbanisation, over more simplistic conception as inverse urbanisation. While urbanisation is typically rural to urban migration, counterurbanisation appears to be predominantly large urban to small urban-within-rural migration (excluding a few exceptional cases mentioned below). And, whereas urbanisation predominantly comprises a migration of typically rural populations to large cities, counterurbanisation comprises both a different type of migrant, typically wealthier and better educated urban populations, and a different type of destination, from larger cities to a specific group of smaller cities. Counterurbanisation, as it is conceived within the Differential Urbanisation model, distinguishes between different kinds of migration flows between different sub-systems of origin and destination settlement types. In this view, counterurbanisation comprises a distinct regional migration sub-stream (Geyer 1990, Geyer, Geyer, du Plessis & van Eeden 2015). When we look at the primary counterurbanisation destinations, counterurbanisation constitutes one of if not the dominant migration type, with Gauteng in-migrants alone comprising 35.25% of all in-migrants. Considering that Gauteng comprises only half the metropolitan population of the country, total figures for counterurbanisation may very well double this percentage. In these terms, the holistic picture may be deceptive in that it may conceal regional migration systems where counterurbanisation is dominant. Unless we are dealing with a regional subtype, with different migrant and migrant destination selection factors, it would be reasonable to conclude that increases in counterurbanisers would be matched by proportional increases in other migrant types, which is

not the case.

4.3 Specific developing world features

4.3.1 Post-productivist theory

The spread of counterurbanisation destinations in South Africa is clearly grouped into two classes: Firstly, there are *environmentalist* counterurbanisation destinations which feature more deconcentrated patterns of development. These resemble the *post-productivist* counterurbanisation which is typical of the developed world. Secondly, there are *productionist* mining destinations, characterised by more concentrated patterns of development. These in turn more closely resemble *productivist* economies. *Productivism* and *post-productivism* are terms which have arisen to describe the changes from the primary sector-led, productivist environment of the developed world during the twentieth century to a structurally adjusted, deintensified, post-productivist economy after the advent of the post-fordist era. Productivism was the dominant economic paradigm for most the previous century, focused on industrial intensification and specialisation. This however changed in the last few decades, with the shift in mindset to de-intensification, economic diversification and sustainability. Although post-productivism claims to be a more holistic development model, there is a clear departure from traditionally primary and secondary sector centred economies for more tertiary and quaternary sector focused development. Post-productivist economies prioritise economic diversification and extensification. Extensification is diametrically opposed to intensification which defines productivism. Intensification consists of streamlining production and implementation of controls, simplifying and standardising/synthesising production processes (by means of industrial automation which synthesises human labour, or genetic modification which synthesises natural biological adaptations). Extensification instead focuses on economic complication and diversification in the interests of maximum market exploitation. It strives to maximizing inclusivity, to remove all restrictions to market expansion, as well as to create new markets through innovation. Post-productivism, through the influence of neo-endogeneous rural development, also emphasises the importance of economic linkages. Rural economies gain competitive advantage though locally embedded relationships which save on transaction costs, and through strong external ties to resources which the local economy cannot provide for itself. Post-productivism is also more popularly associated with modern social values such as development,

commodification and preservation of the symbolic value of rural environments, sustainability and specialised local produce (Lowe, Murdoch & Ward 1995, Murdoch 2000, Argent 2002, Halfacree 1997, Bosworth 2010, Bosworth & Atterton 2012).

But the concept of post-productivism is hard to apply outside of the developed world, partly because it is a response to productivist economics which were never broadly applied across much of the developing world. Following Wilson (2003), we can perhaps use the term pre-productivism. Pre-productivist economies resemble post-productivism in many ways, specifically in terms of economic diversification and extensification, sustainability and promotion of the symbolic value of rural environments. However, these features are historically imposed by circumstance and determined by the demands of economic isolation and self-sufficiency rather than though market innovation. There are also other important differences, such as the under-development or absence of external linkages, of the commodification of the natural environment or of specialised production. Furthermore, the primary focus is still on productivity, and the other post-productivist traits are largely circumstantial.

4.3.2 Post-productivist counterurbanisaiton

Of the two Gauteng out-migrant destination clusters, almost all of those in the first cluster are well-known for popular vacation or retirement centres, termed 'idyll' (Berry 1976) or 'sunshine' destinations (with the exception of Hopetown which serves as a dormitory location for a relatively large labour force serving an expansive spread of intensive irrigation agricultural enterprises along the Orange River). Generally, these destinations feature economic and demographic profiles familiar to developed world counterurbanisation destinations: They are generally economically prosperous development centres, with above-average per capita GVA and employment (although not as high as the mining destinations), diversified economies, with strong construction, catering and accommodation, business services and manufacturing sectors, and thriving agricultural sectors. A strong manufacturing sector has also been able to exploit the extensive infrastructure investments which typically accompany this type of economic development. This sector is further characterised by low employment typical of more advanced highly mechanised industrial sectors.

They are also highly urbanised, confirming that like in the developed world, counterurbanisation is primarily large urban to smaller urban-within-rural rather than true urban to agrarian rural migration. In terms of population features, they feature higher white and lower black populations

and high in-migrant numbers in similar proportions. Older in-migrant numbers (retirement migration) are also high. Finally, they also generally feature low unschooled and high highly-educated populations, with high access to household luxuries, perhaps indicating a higher quality of life.

While it is natural to assume that environmentalist counterurbanisation related development will be low in developing countries where environmentalist counterurbanisation migrant selection populations (wealthy, older and highly-educated) are small, it should not be underestimated. Tourism-based development is one of the most prominent rural development models in the developing world (Wilson 2003), in part because such environmentalist counterurbanisation developments are not limited by the small numbers of native counterurbanising populations but can piggy-back off larger international counterurbanisation-selection populations through international tourism and migration. This suggests that the environmentalist counterurbanisation-related development is not limited to developmentally advanced populations, but occurs where-ever there exists sufficient conditions for environmentalist development to occur.

4.3.3 Productivist counterurbanisation

In contrast to the environmentalist destinations, the mining destinations feature very different characteristics from typical developed world counterurbanisation destinations. These feature characteristics which are more typically productionist and productivist: they are economically specialised and non-diversified, typical of the early development-phase urban economies, with a single sector, mining, dominating their economies. They also attract large volumes of typically productionist urbanising lower skilled labour (in addition to counterurbanisers), a large proportion of whom are young working adults rather than the older migrants more typical of counterurbanisation. Demographically, they are more standard than the post-productivist destinations, excepting for significantly higher numbers in the prosperity indicators, namely average per capita GVA, employment and the high income percentage of the population. However, we can deduce from the lower access to household luxuries that this wealth is more unevenly spread.

Although counterurbanisation destinations are generally more prosperous on average (50.93% higher per capita GVA on average), the mining destinations were significantly more so by a large margin (98.28% higher on average). Additionally, their demographic characteristics imply they are also less selective and more inclusive than the post-productivist environmentalist destinations. They

provide economic opportunities for both less well-educated and well-off urbanising migrants (the majority in the developing world) as well as more prosperous counterurbanisers. This may imply that while the post-productivist model of counterurbanisation has its advantages, the productionist/productivist model is still more suited to promoting development in developing economies.

The greater productivity of productionist counterurbanisation destinations can be attributed to its more centralised development patterns (Hart 1983). Economic growth in these regions then is less constrained by the limitations of costly decentralised infrastructure investment, offering higher profit margins per unit of investment. At the same time, such types of development do carry some risk. Research on similar productionist commercial counterurbanisation in Turkey linked it to losses in regional economic diversity and consequently short-term increases in productivity were offset by long-term economic vulnerability (Gulumser, Baycan Levent & Nijkamp 2010).

One of the dominant distinctions between counterurbanisation in the developed and developing worlds is between environmentalist and developmentalist or productionist patterns of development. Counterurbanisation in the developed world demonstrates a predominantly environmentalist characteristic, while the urbanisation dominant in the developing world is characterised by coexistence of both productionist and environmentalist. However, even environmentalist counterurbanisation is characterised by a highly centralised character. South Africa is a country blessed with an abundance of natural capital, yet environmentalist counterurbanisation is clearly concentrated to the southern coastal regions, which unsurprisingly is also among the historically developed regions. This same trend of mixed productionist and environmentalist counterurbanisation can be seen in other more advanced developing economies such as Brazil and Mexico. Significant counterurbanisation is occurring in the more rural north-east of Brazil centred on both growing tourism and industrial economic centres (Baeninger 2002). In Mexico, counterurbanisation is similarly centred firstly on the growing export-industry centres on the US border, and to a lesser extent on tourism centres in the South (Aguilar & Graizbord 2002).

4.3.4 Pre-productivist counterurbanisation

Counterurbanisation is a predominantly urban phenomenon, and both the South African data, based on the selected counterurbanisation destinations, and research from developing countries elsewhere seems to mirror this. This is an important continuity between counterurbanisation as it

occurs in the developed world and in the developing world. This type of counterurbanisation related development is closely linked to global growth of the tertiary and quarternary sectors, strongly linked to advances in transport and communications technologies and the increased individual and industrial mobility this has produced (Sant & Simmons 1993).

However, there is an important exception in the case of many Sub-Saharan African countries, where true counterurbanisation or return migration appears to be occurring (Potts 2009), and may indicate an important subtype of migration system deserving of further study. Here urban economic decline has led to what may perhaps be a premature form of counterurbanisation. This form of survivalist counterurbanisation or circular migration (Potts 2005, Beauchemin 2011, Geyer, Geyer, du Plessis & van Eeden 2015) derives from a survivalist recourse of poor urban households sending dependants to rural areas to supplement household income through savings due to lower rural costs of living or through survivalist agriculture.

Although rural areas here have a superficial resemblance to the kind of rural revitalisation which has accompanied counterurbanisation in the developed world, this is perhaps better defined as a regression to a pre-productivist economy rather than true post-productivism, and differs from the latter in several respects: Firstly, it is true urban to agrarian rural migration rather than large urban to small urban-within-rural migration. Secondly, it seems predominantly focused on the agricultural sector rather than economically diversification. And thirdly, urban linkages will likely be weaker due to declining urban economies.

Still, it is important not to negatively prejudge economic adaptations which have provided livelihoods for many in times of economic hardship, and not to overstate the differences. Firstly, as with counterurbanisation elsewhere, the results for rural communities often appear to be beneficial, providing economic revitalisation in the destination regions. Secondly, urban migrants are often more skilled or better educated populations with new ideas and technological innovations. Thirdly, there are some signs of post-productivist diversification, with migrants bringing urban economic expertise along with them, developing non-primary sectors and providing valuable trade linkages with urban markets (Baeuchemin 2011, Potts 2005, Arene & Mkpado 2002). Nor is the cause, namely economic recession and urban economic decline, unfamiliar to the developed world.

Generally speaking then, we still see the same overall pattern of counterurbanisation: urban populations migrate to rural areas to develop unexploited natural capital. In post-productivist economies where land is already highly exploited, natural capital takes the form of aesthetic and quality of life benefits. In pre-productivist economies where unused agricultural land remains we find agricultural counterurbanisation. The absence of significant similar types of counterurbanisation in South Africa is likely for the same reasons – most agricultural land is already

being exploited (Jacobs & Hart 2014, Perret, Anseeuw & Mathebula 2005).

4.3.5 Decentralisation policies

South African environmentalist counterurbanisation demonstrates a clearly concentrated pattern. Primary determining factors in rural development are lower rural labour wages, reduced market competition and competition for state services, environmental capital and increased accessibility due to transport and communications investments (Lowe, Murdoch & Ward 1995). In the developing world, however, it is the last which is likely to have the greatest influence on development potential. The post-productivist development model which defines these regions is network-based, and in the absence of the necessary infrastructure such networks are unsustainable. Because developing economies are smaller than their counterparts in the developed world, available capital for transport and communications investment will be lower, and therefore transport and communications costs for rural businesses will predictably be the costliest and the most determining factor in rural development.

Although rural development is inherently uneven, whether it is in the developed world or the developing world (Argent 2002, Scott, Gilbert & Gelan 2007, Stockdale, Findlay & Short 2000, Bijkers 2011), the economic limitations of developing countries are only likely to compound this uneven distribution. Newer economic theories such as the New Economic Geography and Endogenous Growth theories emphasise the importance of state intervention to mitigate the effects of regional lock-in and path-dependency effects (Clinch & O'Neill 2009). The limited resources of LDCs translates directly into increased lock-in effects of existing spatially uneven economic growth trends. This naturally results in highly concentrated and uneven development of rural and smaller urban settlements which will continue into the foreseeable future. Ingle's study (2013) of commercial counterurbanisation in more remote rural settlements in South Africa supports this conclusion.

Paradoxically, this implies that the more limited and selective government infrastructure investment resources are, the more influential its role on counterurban related rural development. This is evidenced by the considerable historical evidence of the influence of policy on development patterns in developing countries, as in case of Apartheid induced counterurbanisation in South Africa (Geyer & van der Merwe 2002) or the effects of industrial decentralisation policies in Turkey for example (Gulumser, Baycan Levent & Nijkamp 2010). An important policy distinction in this

regard is that of exploitative versus developmental counterurbanisation (Brown & Lawson 1989). Decentralisation policies are common in developing countries as they are seen as a necessary counterweight to the natural tendency to the highly uneven urban concentrations typical to developing countries to relieve congestion pressures (Lee 1985). Exploitative counterurbanisation decentralises unemployed urban populations by disposing of them in remote rural areas to as-it-were take care of themselves, often with the additional political motive of breaking up politically discontented urban concentrations. Developmental counterurbanisation policies on the other hand, decentralise unemployed populations from over-burdened primate cities to new economic growth poles in secondary centres. This difference is perhaps best illustrated by Beauchemin's comparison between counterurbanisation in Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, where in both cases urban economic decline lead to high volumes of rural migration and strong counterurbanisation policies. But in the case of the former, an exploitative policy was employed, resulting in failed migration and eventually civil war, while for the latter, developmental policies were generally successful (Beauchemin 2011).

4.4 Conclusions

In summary, the following similarities were found between counterurbanisation in developed and developing countries: Differentiated migration patterns conforming largely to the Differential Urbanisation framework. Although counterurbanisation still appears to be a migration substream for most developing countries, evidence suggests that it is generally on the increase, and the overall picture is deceptive because counterurbanisation may rival or even exceed urbanisation within certain regional and/or demographic sub-sections. As in the developed world, there are indications of higher volumes of older, better educated and more economically mobile counterurbanising populations, as well as of child migrants. Counterurbanisation also appears to favour urban-within-rural rather than true agrarian rural destinations, outside of a few exceptional cases. Additionally, counterurbanisation appears to be linked with economically stronger and faster growing smaller urban centres and therefore to significant changes in urban hierarchies and urban systems. Counterurbanisation also displays the same uneven patterns of distribution and related development, and may be even more pronounced in the developing world. The dominant form of first world environmentalist and post-productivist counterurbanisation is also evident in the developing world. Finally, as in the developed world, there are indications that counterurbanisation is strongly influenced by economic recession and government spatial development policy.

Equally importantly, the research also demonstrated the following significant differences: Most importantly, despite a few exceptions counterurbanisation is still a substream phenomenon, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Contrary to the developed world, productionist and productivist appear to co-exist with and even exceed post-productivist counterurbanisation, and there are also instances of a-typical pre-productivist counterurbanisation. For this reason, counterurbanisation also appears to be more inclusive in the developing world and more representative of the general population. Finally, there are indications that policy and economic recession may influence counterurbanisation even more strongly in these countries.

In conclusion, perhaps surprisingly, there appears to be a strong continuity between counterurbanisation in the developed and developing world. This means that many conclusions and valuable insights drawn from research on counterurbanisation may be carried over to inform counterurbanisation research and policy development in developing countries, which is even more important if the commercial counterurbanisation hypothesis is correct. It also means that developed world research can be used to complement research in the developing world. At the same time, there are also important differences, including important migration sub-types such as productionist and survivalist counterurbanisation, which emphasise the importance of continuing and increasing the amount of research on counterurbanisation in the developing world.

As elsewhere, the South African evidence does support the initial hypothesis in that it demonstrates a relationship between counterurbanisation and economic development. Admittedly, it is unclear whether the nature of that relationship is determinative or merely coincidental. But this indeterminacy is inherent to the subject – even in the case of commercial counterurbanisation research, which goes beyond to prove that counterurbanisation is linked to entrepreneurship, the same uncertainty regarding the relationship between counterurban entrepreneurship and economic development remains. However, at least we can conclude that counterurbanisation generally seems to play much the same role in economic decentralisation the developing world as in the developed world.

Ultimately, any conclusions drawn must be tentative, given the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, I believe that the results warrant further research. If the hypothesis proves true, counterurbanisation holds significant potential in increasing our understanding of historical processes of economic and urban systems development and demographic change. It can also prove valuable in understanding contemporary problems faced in the developing world, as well as in predicting future economic and population trends. Finally, if the role of policy on counterurbanisation in the developing world is as significant as the research suggests, counterubanisation controls may prove to be a powerful policy instrument in the future.

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